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# THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL JOURNAL

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## Educational News and Editorial Comment

### RESEARCH IN A STATE TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

The State Teachers' Association of Ohio has a research department. In March of this year this department issued in very attractive form a list of its members, together with a statement of the researches which each member completed during the year and those which he or she has under way.

The purpose of this list is to make workers in the field of scientific work aware of what their fellow-investigators are doing. The prefatory note also makes the generous proposal that "members will be glad to send to anyone who so requests detailed information on any completed studies. They will be glad also to advise, as far as possible, on studies now in progress." This statement is signed by the president of the department, R. L. Morton, of Ohio University.

As an example of the kind of work that is announced in the bulletin, the full list of the president's researches may be quoted.

#### *Studies completed:*

Analysis of marks assigned at Ohio University, Ohio University Bulletin, Vol. XVIII, No. 4.

The relative validity of timed-sentence and column tests in spelling.

*Studies not completed:*

The reliability of measurements in spelling.

The intelligence of teachers.

The possibility of training teachers in service to use the Stanford-Binet Scale.

The ability of teachers to rate English composition with a scale.

Curriculum content in junior high school mathematics.

Vocabulary increase as conditioned by intelligence and the study of Latin.

(In co-operation with various colleagues for the American Classical League.)

The type of information which is contained in this bulletin will undoubtedly serve to bring about co-operation among workers in Ohio. It has another value also, no less obvious to anyone who looks through the lists of investigations. It suggests in a very stimulating way the interests which educational science is serving and points out lines of inquiry in which there might very advantageously be more workers.

## YEARBOOK FOR PRINCIPALS

The Department of Elementary Principals of the National Education Association will publish very shortly a yearbook which is intended to be helpful to elementary-school principals in carrying on their supervisory and administrative duties. The various chapters deal in succession with such matters as "The Art of Visitation," "The Measurement of Efficiency," "Following Up the Intelligence Test," "The Problem of the Individual Case," "Provision for the Gifted Child," and other related matters.

The price of the volume is \$1.50. It will be ready about June 15 and will consist of approximately two hundred and fifty pages. Members of the department, who now number about seven hundred, will receive this book. The secretary of the department is John L. Bracken, of the U. S. Grant School, Duluth, Minnesota. He invites correspondence from all elementary-school principals who wish to become members of the department and from others who wish to secure copies of the book.

## POPULAR SUBSCRIPTION FOR A SCHOOL BUILDING

The town of Winnetka, Illinois, a residential suburb of the city of Chicago, found that it could not bond itself under the state law for a sum sufficient to supply more than the elementary-school

buildings required for the first six grades. The high school of this town is conducted by a board distinct from the board in charge of the elementary schools and has no power to deal with the problems of the seventh and eighth grades.

Under these conditions the superintendent of elementary schools and his board decided to try the experiment of raising by popular subscription the funds for a new junior high school.

The village was divided into eight zones, and each was supplied with a zone captain who appointed solicitors for the different sections of his zone, usually one for each square block. The way for the solicitors was prepared by a barrage of publicity mailed, delivered at doors, and printed in the local paper. A large thermometer was erected to show the progress of the fund. Competition encouraged the zone captains to reach their quotas.

The first drive raised \$300,000 of the \$350,000 which was estimated to be necessary for the building. Decreased building costs have brought the amount down to \$342,000, and now the organization is engaged in a drive to raise the unsubscribed \$42,000. Meanwhile, the building is rapidly nearing completion, and classes are occupying the completed parts of the building.

The attitude of the community was complicated at one time by a disagreement in regard to the site. Some of the embers of that are still glowing, but for the most part all is peaceful. Many of the former opponents have now subscribed.

As part of the campaign, a pamphlet entitled "Ammunition" was issued, giving all of the facts relating to the undertaking. There are maps of the village and a picture showing the plan of the proposed school. There are clear statements and arguments in favor of the plan.

The comment of the superintendent at the close of the successful campaign is as follows:

The community as a whole is very proud of the building now that it is so nearly ready. There have been many cases of real sacrifice in an effort to subscribe adequately.

#### EYESIGHT, HEALTH, AND EFFICIENCY

The Eyesight Conservation Council of America, which has its office in the Times Building, New York City, will mail to any

teacher, for ten cents, a testing chart with directions for measuring the eyesight of pupils. The Council is also prepared to supply literature showing the importance of more general attention to the matter of eyesight.

One of the statistical bulletins issued by the Council contains the following paragraphs:

It was learned some years ago by the examination of several thousand school children in one of our large cities that 66 per cent of them had defective vision of such a degree as to warrant the wearing of glasses.

Quite recently the examination of more than ten thousand employees in factories and commercial houses showed that 53 per cent had uncorrected faulty vision and 13 per cent had defects which were corrected, making a total of 66 per cent with defective eyes.

These two surveys were made under different auspices several years apart. The figures are startling. They mean that a very large majority of the public have eyes defective to such a degree as to require glasses to conserve vision and make the individual a happier and more efficient member of society.

Our eyes are large factors in our efficiency. Nature allots each organ of the human machine a certain portion of nerve energy. When eyes that are defective demand more than their share of this nerve energy it must, of necessity, lessen the normal supply. The wasting of nerve energy directly diminishes human efficiency. Often the victim of defective eyes is unaware of trouble. It may be indicated by headaches, often attributed to stomach trouble, by nervousness, drowsiness, or by irritability.

Another bulletin issued by the Council, with the title "A School-room Scene," represents an appealing story which is so true to common experience that it ought to have wide circulation.

"Tom, you may read next." Tom, an overgrown boy two or three years older than the other children in his grade, rose awkwardly to his feet. The teacher turned to her visitor with a shrug which expressed her utter despair of Tom and his ability to read. She said in a whisper, "I think he's just plain dumb. Tom has been in this grade now for two years and he can't read a bit better now than when he came in. Listen to him." Tom was bent over his book, peering at the print, studying out the words one by one. The teacher interrupted his hesitations with a sharp, "That will do, sit down!"

Then she turned to her visitor with resignation in her entire bearing, "What would you do with a hopeless boy like that?"

"Have his eyes examined," the answer came.

"Why, I never thought of that!" gasped the teacher. And then with the thought came various recollections of Tom as he sat in his seat crushed down over his book, and of her sharp admonitions to sit up straight; of his

utter failure to copy problems written on the board, of his inability to learn, which came not from the lack of trying but from what she had termed "dumbness."

The teacher visited Tom's mother and father. After considerable persuasion they at last consented to take the boy to a specialist. He was found to be suffering from astigmatism and near-sightedness which caused the words on the printed page to double and dance before his eyes. A pair of glasses corrected the difficulty, and Tom returned to school able to see as well as any other boy.

#### JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOLS

The last issue of the *Public School Bulletin*, of Dubuque, Iowa, is devoted largely to the effort to persuade the citizens of that city of the wisdom of erecting two new junior high schools. Last month the *Elementary School Journal* printed, without comment, the statement from Fort Wayne, Indiana, of the reasons why the junior high school had been abandoned. Here is a quotation which states part of the Dubuque argument. It presents the other side of the case from that which was presented by the superintendent of schools at Fort Wayne.

#### WHAT IT WILL MEAN TO THE ELEMENTARY DEPARTMENT

The erection of two junior high schools and the use of the present high-school building at 15th and Locust for a down-town junior high school will mean that all of the seventh-, eighth-, and ninth-grade pupils will be removed from their present quarters, which can then be used to provide: (1) ample class room to relieve oversized classes; (2) proper facilities for classes now being housed in temporary frame structures; (3) classrooms for pupils who should be instructed in special classes; and (4) centrally located quarters for our special schools—the deaf, the exceptional children, the open-air group.

#### WHAT IT WILL MEAN TO OTHER BOYS AND GIRLS

An opportunity to attend:

1. A school organized and administered in accordance with the fundamental laws of development—physical, mental, social—of this particular age; a school whose chief concern is the fullest possible development of boys and girls instead of textbook facts or courses of study; a school working with nature, directing and guiding the natural tendencies of this particular age instead of trying to repress them.

2. A school which recognizes individual differences and provides practical vocational courses for the boys and girls who go to work early in life; academic courses for those who intend to get a higher education; work with the hands as well as the mind; a school which helps boys and girls discover their talents and make reasonable adjustments for life-work instead of the traditional

school which offers academic training only and thus eliminates all of the boys and girls who are not "bookish." See enrolments by grades for verification of this statement.

3. A school enrolling enough boys and girls of the same age to allow departmental organization, which means that each teacher is required to teach only one subject although she has as many classes as under the old plan. It means also better, more enthusiastic teaching and sounder scholarship, as no one can spread out over many fields or subjects and develop the interest or enthusiasm possible in a field limited to one subject. Specialist *vs.* Jack of all trades! Allowing the teacher to focus will result in inspiring more boys and girls.

4. A school which will not fail to promote a boy or girl who happens to be weak in a few subjects but will advance pupils in the subjects in which they make good and require them to repeat only the subjects in which they fail; a school of encouragement and reward for work well done. No needless repetition! No waste of time or effort!

5. A school which recognizes that the boys and girls of this particular age are driven out of school very often by the rules and regulations necessary for the younger children in the elementary department; a school which recognizes that boys and girls of this age are not ready for the greater freedom allowed the older senior high school pupils; a school which recognizes that responsibilities should be assumed gradually as the pupils are able to take them on successfully; a school in which the discipline is adjusted to the stage of development and maturity of the pupils; a school which appeals to the boys and girls of this age as a "square deal." As one of the boys in the Davenport Junior Highs said recently, "Gee! this is some school!"

6. A school which does not afford any chance for older boys and girls to "lord it over" the very young, small children and which offers no opportunity for younger children to copy undesirable traits or habits of much older pupils, for the junior high school enrolls pupils of approximately the same age, pupils in the same stage of social development. Qualities of leadership, initiative, and personality, which are suppressed where older pupils naturally take the lead, are stimulated and developed when there is little difference in the ages of the members of the group. Experiments in grouping children have proved that boys and girls do better work and are happier when they are kept in groups of approximately the same age.

7. A school which interests pupils and parents to such an extent that the school life of the boys and girls is prolonged in most cases one year and in many, three years; a school which is raising the general level of preparation for citizenship.

#### THE BASIS FOR JUDGMENT

The facts on which the foregoing statements are based are on file in the office of the Board of Education. We are not guessing or prophesying—just reporting what experience has demonstrated. You judge a tree by its fruits! Why not judge a school by what it accomplishes!

## FROM KANSAS

The following official notice was received by the *Elementary School Journal* some days ago:

## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

Hereafter no recommendations for school positions will be made for teachers, instructors, or superintendents who use tobacco in any form.

No state certificates or institute certificates will be issued to tobacco users.

Schools and colleges that permit the use of tobacco in any form, by administrative heads, instructors, or pupils, cannot remain on the accredited list.

Credits sent to the State Department from normal schools, colleges, and universities, where the heads of these institutions, faculty members, or students use tobacco in any form, will not be accepted for certification.

This notification is in compliance with the laws of Kansas.

Sincerely,

LORRAINE ELIZABETH WOOSTER,  
*State Superintendent*

The editor then discovered the following item:

Topeka, Kas., May 3.—[Special.]—Miss Lorraine E. Wooster, state school superintendent, has hit a snag in her crusade on tobacco. W. N. Pack, school superintendent at Cimarron, today called upon Miss Wooster and informed her he would not give up his position. Miss Wooster "fired" him because he smoked cigars and belonged to a social club where bridge was played.

Of course, it is not fitting for anyone outside the state to pass on the particular merits of the reforms through which Kansas chooses to put itself. One can only wonder how often democratic communities will elect to have their schools used for all sorts of purposes by persons who would probably be better employed if they could be persuaded to treat schools as educational institutions designed to train children rather than as reformatories for hardened sinners.

## CLASSIFICATION OF PUPILS IN MIAMI, ARIZONA

Miami, Arizona, is a mining town, with a large Mexican population and a mixed addition from southern European countries. During the past year the school system of that city has segregated the bright pupils from the dull on the basis of mental tests and has assigned to a given teacher the one group or the other. In spite of



very adverse conditions of attendance and continuity of schooling, Superintendent Tupper reports that the teachers, who were at first doubtful, have accepted the plan as highly successful.

The following report indicates the conditions under which the experiment was tried and the results accomplished.

*Conditions:*

1. Of our total annual enrolment, only 60 per cent are in average daily attendance, as compared with 69 per cent for the state of Arizona and 77 per cent for the western division of the United States as defined in the *Report of the Commissioner of Education for 1916*.

2. Only 41.5 per cent of our pupils have been in the local schools more than two years; 26.5 per cent have been with us between one and two years; 32.5 per cent have been with us one year or less.

3. According to mental group tests, 75 per cent of our enrolment is developing at a rate less than the standard average with 25 per cent developing at a rate above average.

*Results:*

1. Into this situation the scientific method was introduced in the search for means of increasing efficiency. Under the old method, with well-trained and competent teachers, the percentage of failures was 15.3. After one semester of the new method this had fallen to 10.6 per cent, and after two semesters of trial the unusually low mark of 3.8 per cent of failures was reached.

2. During this same period 11 per cent of our enrolment was accelerated by a half-year, 117 pupils. In other words, pupils who were developing more rapidly than the average were given a chance to progress through the grades at a rate paralleling their natural rate of development. This has not resulted in accelerating these pupils out of their natural social group as we have had a retardation rate of 47 per cent, which has now fallen to 37 per cent, with very few so-called "accelerates."

3. Of the accelerated pupils (117) none are doing failing work; 15 per cent are doing work of less than average quality; 46 per cent are doing average work; 39 per cent are doing superior work. Good reasons can be assigned for the 15 per cent doing inferior work. Sickness, absence, discipline, and "last resort" promotions are the chief causes. In other words, these accelerated pupils are doing as good work, or better work, in the advanced grade than they were doing in the lower grade, a record which indicates the care and good judgment used in recommending accelerations.

4. During this period, while failures were falling off so remarkably and while accelerations were taking place, there was no lowering in quality of work accomplished, no letting down of standards. On the contrary, there has been a distinct increase in quality of work as measured by standardized tests in reading, writing, arithmetic, and spelling. The average gain for these four

studies was 3.5 per cent, or 181 additional cases brought to standard performance. In reading, which constituted the main point of emphasis during the past semester, the quality was raised from 26 per cent of the pupils at standard to 50 per cent at standard. In other words, the efficiency of the system in reading was doubled and the schools brought up to standard in this activity as measured by Monroe tests, given, scored, and tabulated by a specialist.

The process involved in this experiment led to the creation of a department of research and the office of primary supervisor. The financial consideration involved has been about \$6,000 annually. This departure has been questioned by many people as being a little extravagant for a system of only fifty grade teachers, and, unless the results can be shown to justify the expenditure, the criticism is well taken.

A community invests its money in schools with no thought of immediate financial return. The only expected return is the progress of the pupils through the schools. When children fail, the community's investment in the teaching given these children has been wasted and the same teaching must be repeated the following year at the expense of the community. A reduction in failures or an increase in accelerations, therefore, represents an increased return to the community on its investment in teaching. Figured on this basis and referring to teaching costs alone, the scientific method as applied in Miami has resulted in a saving of \$17,100 annually through the reduction in wasted teaching as measured by failures and increased accelerations.

The financial return, however, is far from being the important consideration. The important thing is the saving of time to the children, the prevention of habits of failure, the creation of self-confidence, and the development of a sense of power in the children themselves.

The creation of the department of research and office of primary supervisor in a small system of fifty grade teachers is not an extravagance; it is a marked economy. Since their installation failures have fallen from 15.3 per cent to 3.8 per cent, while the average for Arizona cities is 13 per cent of the enrolment failing.

Not only does the financial saving to a community more than pay for the cost of these extra offices when properly filled, but the entire quality of performance is raised, the *esprit de corps* of the teaching staff is stimulated, and the community awakens with pride to the fact that its schools are demonstrably equal to the standards of the country at large.

#### LECTURES ON CHILD WELFARE

The National Child Welfare Association, located at 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City, asks that publicity be given to the following announcement:

"Child Welfare—Everybody's Business," "Makers of American Ideals," and "Warfare or Welfare," are the titles of three illustrated lectures just

announced by the National Child Welfare Association. The lectures are illustrated by fifty colored lantern slides and are for the use of schools, clubs, parent-teacher associations, churches, and community organizations, either as special features of regular programs or as complete programs for special meetings.

"Child Welfare—Everybody's Business" points out that the most effective child-welfare endeavors can be promoted in any community by the simple device of cultivating the normal child's natural inclinations and interests. "Makers of American Ideals" is designed to help young and old alike to realize their debt to the makers of American ideals and is expected to be especially useful to teachers of history and civics as well as for general patriotic programs. "Warfare or Welfare," written for adult audiences, is a frank appeal for more generous official and civilian support for educational and public health activities, with a graphic demonstration of results achieved. The lectures are available by rental or purchase.

#### THE CO-OPERATIVE EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA

The *Eighteenth Annual Report of the Co-operative Education Association of Virginia* sets forth the constructive work done by the community leagues during the past year. With schoolhouses as community centers, 300,000 citizens were assembled to discuss various educational and civic problems. Every county in the state has a local organization. A state-wide program by months is generally followed. Some of the topics dealt with are indicated by the following reports of monthly programs: December, "Community Christmas Celebration," 17,000 pieces of literature distributed; February, "Better Health," 20,000 bulletins; March, "Better Roads," 15,000 bulletins; May, "Better Playgrounds," 12,000 bulletins; November, "Better Libraries," 191,000 bulletins. In 1921 the locals raised approximately \$200,000 for educational and civic improvement. Items of expenditure range from "buying a flag pole for the school" to "supplementing teacher's salary." More than 1,000 different items of school and civic help are mentioned in the report. During the decade 1911-21 the leagues have expended nearly \$1,000,000 for community improvement.

#### FINANCING EDUCATION IN ENGLAND

The following statement of the educational situation in England appeared as an editorial in the *New York Evening Post*:

After-war depression seriously affected England's reconstruction programs, and especially her education program. The Fisher act, with its immense

structure of elementary and secondary education, its continuation schooling, and, above all, its great promise of the extension of universal educational opportunities for the first time on a democratic basis in England, was threatened. Little by little some of its provisions began to be deferred. Recently the Geddes committee, intent upon financial economies, hit upon education—always the easiest to attack, since its results are seldom evident in the current generation. The Geddes committee recommended a cut in the budget of £18,000,000, chiefly by curtailing early schooling and reducing salaries.

Had the Government accepted anywhere near the full reductions recommended by the committee the friends of education would have felt that the depths had indeed been reached. There was a tremendous protest throughout the country, however, and the government hastened to announce that it was prepared to accept a reduction only one-third as large as that recommended by the Geddes committee. In announcing the government's decision the Chancellor of the Exchequer gave vigorous reassurance of the government's intention to stand by the education program. Thus the situation has changed almost overnight from one of fear to one of hope.

The most encouraging element in the English educational situation, as in the educational situation in the United States, is that the professional educational forces are no longer fighting alone. They are supported by a host of public-spirited citizens newly aroused to the tremendous significance of a national system of education. In England many local authorities are reported to be going ahead with new projects of the type outlined in the Fisher act, regardless of the government's invitation to hold off.